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A MARVEL IN STEAMING.

Of all the pleasant ways of making an excursion, none can excel that of travelling in a well-appointed steam-boat on a river, lake, or estuary—good weather of course being indispensable. Some sea-steamers are wonderfully fine floating hotels, but then there is always associated with them a certain sense of insecurity; for in ploughing across the ocean in the darkness of night, and a thousand miles from land, even an old voyager cannot occasionally help feeling a slight degree of nervousness. We should also except American river-boats generally from the class of vessels in which one is placed perfectly at one's ease on the score of safety; and considering the reckless way that these boats are usually urged onward, the wonder is how any of them survive a voyage. In continental travel, the most agreeable steamers are those on the Rhine, and few things are more exhilarating than a leisurely trip up and down that historic and most picturesque river, stopping every night at some curious old-fashioned town on its banks.

So far as our opinion goes, however, no species of home excursioning possesses so many recommendable qualities as that which can be pursued by means of Hutcheson's steamers on the Clyde and shores of the West Highlands. Years ago, we said as much, and now we say it more emphatically. Those who have not seen these vessels, scarcely imagine to what perfection British river and channel steamers have been brought. All along the south coast of England, the short-trip passenger-steamers are on a comparatively poor scale. The Calais and Boulogne boats are very inferior to what they might be and ought to be, considering the nature of their traffic. As for the boats on that very fashionable passage from Portsmouth to Ryde, some of them bear a resemblance to the cast-off steamers of the Forth or Clyde forty years ago. The taste for a large and elegant class of ferry and channel steamers has not been developed on the southern and well-frequented coasts. It is, in short, only on the Clyde that we see this system of locomotion

brought to that degree of perfection which may be said to embrace the swiftness, elegance, and comfort—and more than the comfort—of American river-steamers with the security of British sea-going vessels.

Why the Clyde should have taken a lead in the business, it is unnecessary here to inquire very minutely. For one thing, the wonderful aptitude of the river itself—the Scottish Hudson—for this sort of navigation, has had an influence. While the river, however, has stirred up the travelling propensities of the people, they, in turn, have operated on the river. The Clyde of old topographies is not the Clyde of modern times. Such has been the extraordinary activity employed in scooping out, widening, and embanking within the last thirty years, that a narrow and shallow stream has been transformed into an inlet of the sea, sufficient to float large vessels on its surface—very much as if the Thames in all its capacious dimensions at Greenwich were, by engineering processes, to be brought up to Richmond.

Everything great in this world has had some one man to begin it—not a mere talker or speculator, but one who goes to work in right earnest, even if he is laughed at for his pains. The man who saw the right idea in the present instance was David Hutcheson. He perceived what were the aptitudes of the Clyde and Hebridean archipelago for steam-boating, on a scale commensurate with that universal desire to travel which forms so curious a feature in the present age; and commencing about ten years since, and aided by his brother and others, he has contrived to build up a very wonderful organisation for pleasure-excursions, as also for trading purposes, all along the north-west—the picturesque touring-region—of Scotland. When we say that mainly through his persevering ingenuity a person may now visit spots of interest from the Clyde almost to John o' Groats—Kyles of Bute, Loch Fyne, Oban, Staffa, Iona, Glencoe, Mull, Skye, and more distant places, even as far as Inverness by way of the Caledonian Canal—with as much certainty and ease as if he were making a trip from London Bridge to Gravesend,

some notion will be gained of the system of transit. But besides the varied fleet of steamers, there is a mechanism for public accommodation, without which the organisation would be incomplete. We may just barely allude to the jetties for landing passengers, the covered wharfs for receiving goods, and the many hotels which have sprung up wherever the vessels happen to touch. What a difference from the time—not quite a century ago—when Johnson and Boswell scrambled about in small boats, and were fain, after a supper of oatcakes and whisky, to sleep on a couch of heather in the corner of a smoky Highland bothy!

We are not going to supersede the ordinary channels of intelligence by stating how tourists may get on from one place to another in an excursion to the Hebrides, but will simply tell them that they need give themselves no further trouble than to start from Glasgow any morning at seven o'clock in the *Iona*, the first boat in the series; after which they will be handed from one vessel to another according as they have a fancy—fed and lodged all the way, be it long or short, in sumptuous style. The present *Iona*, in which the Highland tour begins, is the third of the name, and fine as were its predecessors, this considerably excels them. Last summer, we made a trip with *Iona* the Second, and now having performed the same round with *Iona* the Third (which is said to have cost about £20,000), can speak of it with a certain amount of experience.

The appearance of the *Iona* reminds one of the passenger-steamers on the Hudson and St Lawrence. It is constructed on the American pattern, with a long saloon full of windows on deck, and a railed promenade above, on which in the open air we may enjoy to its full extent the beautiful scenery around. The vessel, however, is three stories in depth. Beneath the saloon, and reached by a broad flight of steps, there is a spacious apartment, well lighted and ventilated, for serving refreshments. The vast length of the vessel will surprise those who have not been on board American river-steamers. It is 260 feet long by a breadth, for the greater part, of nearly 25 feet. The moving force consists of a pair of oscillating engines of 180 horse-power, which work with singular smoothness, and can be instantly reversed or stopped. The waste steam, instead of being allowed to rush with ferocity into the atmosphere along with the smoke, so as to spatter every one with dirt, makes its decorous exit by apertures like two nostrils in front, near the surface of the water—an immense and much-needed improvement in steam-boat building. The *Iona* being a paddle-steamer, moves with a steadiness which seems deficient where the screw, with its horrid grinding noise, is employed for propulsion. In its trial-trip against a gale of wind, the *Iona* went at the rate of about nineteen miles an hour; but we believe that its usual speed is from fifteen to eighteen miles, according to the state of tides and amount of burden to be carried. Looking at the licence of the government inspector, we see

that it gives permission to carry as many as fourteen hundred passengers for a part of the voyage. When we went aboard in its seaward trip at Greenock, the number of passengers might be about a thousand, pretty equally divided between first and second class; yet, from the great space at command, there was no painful crowding. The upper deck, with its sofas, shewed numbers seated and promenading or leaning over the bulwarks, with eyes directed towards the far-reaching lochs among the lofty blue hills. Thanks to the cheap press, many were engaged in perusing the morning papers, supplies of which are to be obtained from juvenile traders, who are seen also to do some business in selling maps and guide-books to tourists. Descending to the principal saloon, which occupies the after-part of the vessel, and is sixty feet in length, it was seen, as respects painting, gilding, carpeting, and couches of Utrecht velvet, to possess all the luxury of a drawing-room. On the tables were laid materials for writing, which, as in all Hutcheson's boats, are given on a liberal scale; and as there are letter-boxes on board, passengers are enabled to post their correspondence during their tour.

The number of persons for whom dinner can be prepared on board of steam-boats, has always appeared to us a kind of marvel. You hear excellent managing wives insisting on the importance of a good large kitchen, without which it is not possible to get up a dinner for a dozen people; but, strange to say, in places the size of a small closet on board steamers, dinners are daily prepared for hundreds. The thing is a problem, 'which no fellow can understand.' We observe that this miracle in cookery is performed in the *Iona*. 'How many can you dine?' said we to the head-steward. 'Two hundred and fifty; but more if necessary.' And such dinners! Two long tables were equipped in a manner which would not have disgraced the mansion of a nobleman—everything in the best style, with ice at discretion. The breakfasts as well as the dinners are so sumptuous and tempting, and such are the appetising qualities of the voyage, that persons who wish to remain lean and interesting had better abstain from the trip. As we have no desire of that kind, but, on the contrary, would be glad of a little more robustness, notwithstanding its extreme vulgarity, we possess a high relish for these repasts, and think it might not be a bad plan to contract for a summer's board in the *Iona*. There would assuredly be no want of company. Every day a fresh set of people, some of them old acquaintances, would leave no time for ennui. We remark, that this gregarious quality of the vessel affords an opportunity for amusement to the villa-inhabitants on the Clyde. When they want to see the world—the gentlemen to talk politics, and the ladies to learn the last phase in the crinoline frenzy—they step on board this floating palace, make a circuit of a hundred miles, and come back to their homes to tea, all for a few shillings—having had half a day's

delightful exhilaration without any kind of bodily fatigue. Such are some of the triumphs of modern practical science, when directed by an intelligent consideration of human wants and feelings. Great Britain can shew nothing more thoroughly adapted for locomotion in conjunction with health, mental and physical, than Hutcheson's Clyde and West Highland steamers. We know not what steamers may come to. At present, the finest thing of the kind is the Iona.

W. C.

MARRIED BENEATH HIM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LOST SIR MASSINGERD.'

CHAPTER IV.—THE REV. ROBERT MORRIT.

THOUGH the Rev. Robert Morrit was ecclesiastically but the curate of a poor parish, his social position was good. He held a Fellowship at Camford, where he had taken an excellent degree—which set him in easy circumstances (provided he remained a bachelor) for life.

The living itself, which was in the gift of his college, would fall to him upon the demise of the present vicar, who was an involuntary absentee, and kept in a state of suspension by his bishop—the living and the village, as Mr Morrit himself used pleasantly to observe, being both sequestered. The curate, as we have hinted, was an archaeologist of some reputation, and his love of antiquity extended to his cellar, where there was as good old port to be found as in any house in the county. His enemies—for the good man was not without them—asserted that he had obtained that wine by dishonest means. He had, they said, taken an opportunity of revisiting Minim Hall ('a poor college, but mine own,' as he was wont to term it) at a time when its very limited number of young gentlemen were 'down,' as well as their pastors and masters, and only a few weak-minded old Dons in residence, such as neither foreign nor home landscapes could entice from their combination-room during the long vacation. By these lonely old gentlemen, Mr Morrit was welcomed with such enthusiasm that they produced some of that 'twenty Port' for which the Hall had long been famous—although that priceless bin was fast diminishing—and he was rumoured to have repaid their hospitality thus.

'Why, bless my soul, this port is going!' observed he, as soon as he set lips to it.

'Going!' echoed the Principal—all the ruby liquid (not unlike the precious wine of which he was partaking) ebbing swiftly from his cheeks—'going where?'

'It's getting sick,' quoth Mr Morrit, firmly: 'the aroma is gone, the body is vanishing, and six weeks hence it won't be drinkable.'

If the University Commission (an unhatched serpent's egg at that period) had then been sitting, and had just decreed that half a year should see the end of Camford as an English university, the Principal, the Bursar, and the third Fellow of

Minim Hall, then present, could not have been possibly placed in a lower stratum of spirits.

One sipped his wine like a sparrow; the tongue of another flickered like that of an ant-eater about the brim of his wine-glass; the eyes of the third grew dazed with staring at the shining liquid as he held it up between him and the sun. They began to imagine that there really was something excessively wrong about that port.

'I wish to goodness Hickup was here; but he's in Petersburg,' observed the Bursar, sighing. 'I am sure I don't know: it certainly does taste queerly, Morrit, now you mention it.'

'Deuced queerly,' assented the third Fellow, who, nevertheless, had had several glasses.

'What are we to do?' inquired the Principal. 'It will be ten thousand pities to let it spoil in the cellar.'

'Drink it,' said the third Fellow, decisively.

'Then we must telegraph to Hickup, or he will have a fit when he comes back and finds it gone. Now what do you advise, Morrit?'

'Well, you see, it's no affair of mine; I'm so seldom up; but if I were in *your* place, I should say, "Sell it," sell it to somebody who can give a long figure for it, and afford to drink it quickly.'

'We have been offered eight guineas a dozen for it,' observed the Bursar; 'and we have got more than twelve dozen left. I suppose a dealer would not look at it, however, if it is really going.'

'If a wine-merchant tastes that wine, you are done,' observed Mr Morrit, gravely. 'These things get about like wild-fire. The best way will be for one of you to buy it for your private cellar.'

The three Dons looked at each other inquiringly. The Principal was a married man, and dared not do such a thing. The Bursar was not so particular about his drink as to feel inclined to pay any great sum for it. The third Fellow pertinaciously adhered to his original idea that they should drink nothing else until the 'twenty' port was gone.

'I tell you what,' observed Mr Morrit, good-naturedly, 'I'm only a curate, and not a rich man; but sooner than see my old college suffer such a loss as this, I'll take the wine off your hands myself, at five pounds the dozen. My Downs' friends are all port drinkers, and we shall manage to get through most of it, I dare say, while it's pretty good.'

The Principal and Bursar were for embracing this proposition, as well as the generous being who had so sacrificed himself, and the Rev. Robert Morrit would have got clear away with the whole bin, but for the dogged pertinacity of the third Fellow, who insisted that there should be left enough to last them at the rate of a bottle a day until the other men came back. The curate, however, secured eight dozen; and there was a goodly portion still remaining in his Casterton cellar at the date of our introduction to him. Perhaps the change gave it body and improved it. But Professor Hickup, who only returned to

Minim Hall in time to taste the very last bottle, protested, with many strong expressions unfavourable to the late purchaser, that the port was as good port as it had ever been; and upon the truth or falsehood of that verdict rested the charge made against the curate of Casterton.

Far be it from us to rank ourselves with the reverend gentleman's accusers; but there certainly was a humorous twinkle about his eye, and a dry wise smile about his mouth at times, which would almost befit the hero of such a story. He was not nearly so great a favourite with the gentry in his neighbourhood as was his brother-in-law, and indeed they were a little afraid of him; but the poor, for the most part, although not without exceptions, loved him. He was more kind and gentle in his manner to their women than the patronising and would-be charitable ladies, who gave themselves airs, and could not stand the closeness of a labourer's cottage. But he hated poachers and dissenters mortally—the latter of which wicked class were numerous in Casterton—and entertained a somewhat foolish and unreasonable family pride. An unhappy cousin of his, 'removed' by ever so many genealogical branches, but who happened to bear his name and live in his neighbourhood, was the bane of the curate's existence, because he chose to consort with indifferent characters, and to be drinking himself to death with ungentlemanlike rapidity.

Mr Morrit's mind was originally of an antique cast, and had been so warped in the backward direction by a long collegiate course of training, that he was really incapable of appreciating modern things. New potatoes and new milk, he was wont to aver, were all the novelties he ever wished to have about him; although it is doubtful whether his favourite study-chair, spring-hung, and movable from within, or the patent reading-lamp that fitted into the arm thereof, were of that indistinct and far-back period from which alone, he would have it, all excellent things originated.

A man of modern letters, who met Mr Morrit at dinner for the first time, might have come away with the idea that that gentleman was semi-idiotic, as well as dowered with those malicious and snarling qualities so often inherent in persons of inferior mental capacity.

Master Frederick Galton, however—who, as we have said, was a pretty good judge of mankind for his years—was by no means of that opinion, and a very honest friendship existed between these two relatives. Mr Morrit, who hated subservience so far as himself and his own belongings were concerned, and who perhaps did but profess Toryism as some men do Radicalism, only that they may the better exercise their personal independence, perceived in his nephew none of that tendency to lip-service which his fastidious eye detected in his brother-in-law, though it was, after all, may be, nothing but that professional suavity with which no doctor, unless he be a man of acknowledged genius, can afford to dispense; while he gradually beheld his beloved sister renewed in the delicate features and gentle disposition of her son. The boy, on his part, revered the old-world knowledge that his uncle possessed, and appreciated his sarcastic humour, even when he himself was the object of its sting. Nevertheless, he entered the curate's study that morning with the *Seven* against *Thebes* in his hand,

and the other three efforts of genius in his pocket, not without misgiving.

'What!' cried his uncle, perceiving unwonted dejection in his looks—for the boy was accustomed to climb Parnassus with his tutor with exceeding cheerfulness—is it possible you don't take to the *Seven*, Fred? Has that modern trash, which your father suffers you to read, corrupted your taste?'

'No, sir,' answered Frederick (the 'sir' being that sort of Addison-patriarchal style which especially pleased his uncle); 'the *Seven* is very well, but'—

'*Very well!*' exclaimed the idolater of the classics. 'What the dickens do you mean by such an impertinence as that? Is there anything in your Byrons and the rest of them to compare with it? Is there anything *like* it, sir, to be found among the whole lot of your now-a-day poet-tasters?'

'Nothing, sir; nothing in the least like it, I do assure you,' returned the lad with intense gravity.

Mr Morrit carried his double-barrelled gold eye-glasses slowly to his eyes, and surveyed the youth for a full minute without speaking. 'You know, my boy,' said he at length in a gentle tone, 'there is always a certain *tedium* for all parties concerned about a siege.'

'Yes, sir; and there is a *Te Deum* for one of them, at least, when it is finished.'

'Very good, Fred. That is a very pleasant epigrammatic method of intimating that you are tired of the *Seven*.—Now, can you tell me after what protracted siege is it probable that a *Te Deum* was first performed?'

The young man stood thoughtful and serious as became one who was employed about a great historical problem, although he was aware, by the twinkle in his uncle's eyes, that a joke was pending. 'I have got it, sir!' exclaimed he at last, with his face like the sun bursting through a cloud. 'It must have been the siege of Tyre that produced it.' And curate and nephew laughed together in a manner pleasant to behold.*

This almost mechanical quick-sightedness for humorous allusion was one of the strongest bonds, perhaps, that united Mr Morrit and his nephew; for out of such sort of sympathetic material, alas!—and still lower sorts, descending, in some cases, even to a common liking for strong drinks—rather than of the strands of a common faith, morality, or what great principles you will, are the bonds of human friendships formed. There was nobody in all Casterton, nor in many a square mile around it, who was eligible to join that *MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY* of which the Rev. Robert Morrit and Master Frederick Galton were the sole members. On this account, the good priest was blinded to a greater extent than he was aware of, to the faults of his young parishioner and relative, and disposed to favour his inclinations; of which circumstances the youth, on his side, was by no means slow to take advantage.

It was through Uncle Robert's solicitation that

* The worthy reader who does not perceive this joke at sight, is requested to pass on without inquiry. Minute investigation is earnestly deprecated. You have missed an excellent shot, friend, but do not, on that account, go poking after the bird again. Even in the case of your coming up with him at last, you will be sure to be disappointed with his size and plumage. A *jeu d'esprit* is a kind of game which is only beautiful when it is first flushed.

a horse in the doctor's stable had been set apart for the lad's particular use; that he had been permitted to take to 'stick-ups,' and had discarded jackets at least a year before those superficial changes had seemed necessary to his father and Mrs Har-topp, and that he had discontinued the study of the low mathematics formerly imparted to him in private by the village schoolmaster between the hours of seven and eight P.M. Nay, a stray expression now and then from the curate had doubtless helped to dissuade the doctor from pressing upon his son more strongly than he did the adoption of his own profession; and it was to the uncle rather than to the nearer relative that the young man was now about to unbosom himself fully upon that very subject.

Frederick had been watching for his opportunity since he had entered the curate's study that morning, and the siege of Tyre seemed to have afforded it, by putting his uncle in the best of humours.

'My father and I have been having a little serious talk this morning, sir.'

'Ah, choice of a profession, I suppose, and all that sort of thing. You have come to the epoch when that unpleasant matter can be no longer shirked. Well, and how do you like the idea of being a saw-bones? Splendid prospects that calling affords you, does it not? Look at Galen, Dr Sangrado, Dr Faustus, Dr Fell, and Sir Astley Cooper—names that are familiar to us all as household words. The lancet of the surgeon, lad, is as honourable, at least, as the weapon of the cavalry officer, while it is never used to destroy the lives of our fellow-creatures, but to save them. What other things were said, Fred, in favour of saw-bonism besides these?'

'Nothing; not even those, sir; although, if they had been dwelt upon, there is no knowing but that I should have been persuaded. As it was, my father said "that he was sorry, but that he would never force my inclinations."'

'Very good, very kind, and very right, Fred. And to what did you say that your inclinations pointed?'

'Well, sir, I—I'—and the usually voluble youth blushed and stammered, and was actually at a loss for a word.

'What remunerative calling did you hit upon? Come, out with it, lad, and don't be ashamed. Did you say you would be a poet?' and the middle-aged gentleman chuckled and rubbed his hands at the absurdity of the idea, while his nephew stood secretly fingering the translation from Horace, and the original verses of a morbid character, as they reposed in his coat-pocket.

'I said I would go to college, and perhaps into the church.'—

'It is usually termed taking holy orders,' interrupted Mr Morrit, drily.

'Well, sir, I said that I would do that, if—if'—

'If you were driven to it, and could not help yourself; quite so. Allow me to thank you, in the name of the cloth,' said the curate, taking off the velvet head-covering which he wore in his study and while solemnising funerals in windy weather, and which his enemies did not hesitate to call his smoking-cap. 'This patronage of my humble profession is as unexpected as it is flattering.'

'My father wishes it, sir,' returned the lad, no longer hesitating, but in a tone of great annoy-

ance; 'and I shall do my best to gratify him; but my inclinations, I own, point very strongly to literature.'

'Ah,' replied Mr Morrit, rubbing his chin, which was always a sign with him of intense dissatisfaction, 'I see; they point *not* to holy orders, but to literature. The two things being quite incompatible, and wholly different, it would be a sad thing if a young man of your brilliant parts were lost in the ranks of an ignorant and boorish clergy. You entertain no apprehension of that kind—good; although, perhaps, you only say so, to spare my personal feelings. Then, what is the literature which you have in your eye, my young friend? The art of writing libels which are not actionable, under the name of "leading articles"—leading, forsooth, a pack of blind fools into a ditch? Or are you for the serial business of the halfpenny journals? It was only yesterday that I saw the *Mysterious Murderer of Middlehampton*, or the *Midnight Yell*, advertised in letters of appropriate crimson upon the village stocks. You speak as though you were yourself the talented author of that work; if you are, I congratulate you, and will take in the *Family Nuisance*, or whatever the name of the periodical is, until the thrilling narrative is concluded; that is to say, if you confine it within reasonable limits, for I have heard that it is considered injudicious to let these serial romances come to an end at all. You are an honour to our family,' added the curate, fairly exploding with indignation, and as though all that he had said before was but as the powder-train that led to the mine—'you are an honour to our family, Master Frederick Galton, upon my soul you are!'

'I came here, sir, this morning, replied the young man, with a forced calmness and vermilion cheeks, 'under the mistaken impression that I should obtain from you, if not some sympathy, at least some good advice. I wish, now, that I had stopped at home, or held my tongue, and so at least have avoided insult.'

Mr Morrit's little splutter of family pride, compared with the indignation that glowed in the young man's features, and even lit up his very form, was as a farthing candle to a Bude-light, and paled at once its ineffectual glimmer.

'Pooh, nonsense! Who wants to insult you, lad? I am an old fogey; and perhaps some of my judgments upon modern matters may be a little harsh—there.' And the curate made a wry face, as though he had told a falsehood for the sake of peace and quietness. 'Of course I was angry at your thinking of this scribbling being your sole profession. You may be a lawyer, soldier, parson, and still keep up any connection you may have formed with the *Family Nu*—, with the periodicals, I mean, devoted to the intellectual elevation of your fellow-creatures.'

'I have promised my father to be a parson, if anything, sir.'

'Very well, then. Go to the university; and when you have mixed with the best society there, and have got a little older, you will be better able to judge for yourself as to what is likely to suit you. The training cannot hurt you, at all events, but will either fit you for a pulpit, or purify and classicise your style for'—Mr Morrit seized his chin with both his hands, but took them away again—'for modern literature.'

'I am quite prepared to follow your directions

so far, sir; but I must begin with literature at once.'

'By all means,' returned the curate drily, but cheerfully; 'here is half a quire of foolscap and a bundle of goose-quills, and you may take both home with you.'

'I have begun already, sir, as far as manuscript is concerned,' replied Frederick naively. 'I want to see myself in print, and, particularly, to make some money.'

Mr Morrit was far too wise a man to ask what his nephew could possibly want money for in a place like Casterton. His nature, too, though sarcastic and rough, was not without that innate delicacy which respects even a child's feelings, and without which no man is fit to wear the name of gentleman.

'My purse, you know, Fred, is quite at your disposal of course,' said he, turning round to poke the fire, in order to disembarass the young man as much as possible. He was well aware, from observations made at college, that your borrowers do not relish being stared at.

'Thank you kindly, uncle,' returned the boy, greatly mollified; 'but I do not wish that.'

'You are in want, then, of a medium of publication?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Will you let me look at these buds of promise, Fred,' said his uncle, smiling—'at those papers, I mean, with which you have been fumbling in your pockets all this time; or perhaps you will read them yourself?'

'No, sir—not now,' answered the lad firmly. After the indignities he had suffered, he had not the heart to read his specimen chapters of the novel concerning ancient Carthage, nor his translation from Horace, and far less the poetical fragment, which he knew was morbid; nor, indeed, did he consider his uncle to be in a frame of mind adapted for their appreciation.

'What are the names of them, Fred?' inquired Mr Morrit, again bestowing his particular attention upon the fire.

Frederick rehearsed the barren titles rather sheepishly.

'Is the story about ancient Carthage a tale of real life?' inquired the curate innocently; but his nephew could not but perceive the shoulders of his venerable relative shaking with inward merriment.

'I suppose so, sir,' answered the young author tartly.

'And has it been perused by any one save yourself? Has it had the advantage of any disinterested person's critical eye?'

Now, the only individual who had really been indulged with a glance of the Carthaginian story was Mrs Hartopp, the housekeeper, to whom Mr Frederick Galton was accustomed to confide his literary efforts, after the fashion of Molière. It was true, she admired them all to enthusiasm, but Fred was more than doubtful whether her eye could strictly be termed 'critical'; so he replied: 'No, uncle.'

'Very well, my boy; it so happens that I can assist you in your little difficulty. A fellow of our college, who was never good for much, and got dissatisfied with the quiet mode of life pursued at Minim Hall, went to London to "read for the bar," as the phrase goes. Either he did not read enough, or the bar didn't care for his reading, for he soon

turned his gigantic intellect into another channel. He became an author of some little celebrity, and eventually the conductor of a magazine. The name of the thing is, I believe, the *Paternoster Armadillo*!'

'Porcupine, uncle—*Porcupine*. I know it quite well. It has generally one or two good stories, and now and then excessively satirical reviews.'

'Ay; is it possible those can be the thunder of Gory Gumps! I forget why we called him by that name at Camford, his real name being Jonathan Johnson; but we always did so. Now, I dare say he will know what sort of articles are in demand as well as anybody, and I will ask him down about Christmas to have a talk with you, Fred. We shall all come out in the *Porcupine* afterwards, I do not doubt; but we cannot expect so eminent a person to visit us without our paying for it. Gory Gumps will come, I am certain, because he knows about my port.'

Fred's countenance flushed with delighted thankfulness as he replied: 'Thank you, uncle; I am sure I shall never forget your very great kindness.'

'Ah, but you will, Fred,' returned the curate grimly, 'and fifty other kindnesses of far more importance, if you have the luck to meet with that number. You are sixteen now, which is the epoch of gratitude; the time when you feel inclined to make over your whole property to anybody who happens to lend you an umbrella in a hail-storm—but that only lasts a little while.'

Fred. remembered, not without wincing, that he had more than once felt inclined to sacrifice his life in return for very inconsiderable benefits, and in particular, that he had been revolving in his mind quite lately a scheme for laying some of his worldly goods, when he should come to possess any, at the feet of a great social reformer, whose literary works had attracted his ardent mind. How many an impulsive youth has experienced the like generous yearnings, and yet, alas, how few the social reformers who have ever got the money!

With years, we gain worldly wisdom; but for that we must barter many a trustful feeling, many a chivalric resolve, and be content to perceive many a vision splendid 'die away, and fade into the light of common day.'

'Well, uncle,' replied Frederick laughing, 'if mine be the only age for the proper appreciation of benefits, it is as well that I should now obtain as much of them as possible; so, until Mr Jonathan Johnson of the *Porcupine* comes, will you lend me five pounds?'

A youth of equal impulsiveness but less sagacity would have asked for exactly the sum requisite for his present needs, but Master Frederick Galton was not the boy to put himself under an unpleasant obligation (for there is only one uncle in the world, and common to the whole race of civilised mortals, whose loans imply nothing of favour) for the miserable consideration of thirty shillings.

'There,' cried the curate, handing the lad the money; 'and I will excuse you your note of hand.'

'I have one more request to make yet, uncle—that you will say nothing for the present to my father about my choosing literature for my future profession.'

'Certainly I shall not,' replied Mr Morrit curtly; 'and indeed, I sincerely hope that he may never need to hear of it at all. Till Christmas comes,

Frederick, we ourselves will talk no more of it, for I would much rather that we should agree with one another, lad, than quarrel. There is no time now for the *Seven against Thebes* this morning, for I am going out hawking with the Tregarthens in half an hour.'

'Is there hawking to-day, sir?' cried the young man, starting up with an expression of disappointment; 'and there's *Bolus* with his off fore-leg so swelled that I dare not take him out.'

'Come out on *Tentoes*, then—on *Shanks* his mare, as Squire Meyrick facetiously calls it. The meet is at Whitcombe Warren. A lad like you should be able to run by the side of my cob at his best speed, and besides, you shall take hold of my stirrup-leather.'

CHAPTER V.—A DAY'S HAWKING AND ITS RESULTS.

'The clouds are hanging low, Fred,' quoth Mr Morrit, as his stout cob clattered along the ill-paved village street; 'I fear we shall have wet jackets before the day is over.'

'Here comes the weather-wise squire trotting after you,' returned the lad, from the raised foot-pavement: 'for a man who so seldom rises above the earth, his information as to what is coming from the skies is marvellous.'

Thereupon up rode Mr Meyrick—a weather-worn gentleman of sixty, whose face would have been eminently handsome, had not nature omitted in it the element of expression altogether—in spotless cords, but with a shooting-jacket as black as the parson's, and a hazel switch in his hand in place of a hunting-whip. 'How are you, Morrit? How are you, young gentleman?' (the latter salutation being by no means so cordial as the former, for he was suspicious of youthful bookworms, and perhaps a little jealous of Frederick's well-known superiority to his own boy).

'I am hanged if I know what I ought to put on for such a sport as this. One can't wear one's coursing uniform, nor yet the green coat one uses for the thistle-whippers.'

As a fox-hunter, Mr Meyrick had a supreme contempt for the hounds called harriers, and indeed for most pursuits and pastimes except fox-hunting; but Mr Tregarthen had sent round to give notice that his hawks would be flown on this particular day, and the squire had made a point of attending the sport, as a personal favour to that gentleman.

'Put on your red coat, man,' replied the parson, gravely; 'scarlet is the only wear for hawking in.'

'My red coat!' replied the squire with indignation. 'I'd like to see myself riding after yon carrion-kites in pink.' And indeed the donning of that sacred attire for such a purpose—stained at the tails though the garment was, as though it had been used for pen-wiping—would have appeared to Mr Meyrick no less a sacrilege than the turning out in full canonicals after a fox would have seemed to the Anglican curate.

'Your ancestors, however, were wont to hawk in coloured coats before now,' returned Mr Morrit; 'and perhaps in this very Chaldeote Bottom to which we are now bound. The ancient Britons, they say, first taught the pastime to the Romans.'

'Ay, ay, but that was in very old times,' quoth the Franklin apologetically, but not a little gratified, too, with this reference to the antiquity of his race.

'Yes, sir,' interposed Frederick, laughing, 'and their coats were for the most part coats of paint. On a day such as this is like to be, you might have gone out as brave as a rainbow, and yet returned washed-out, to the homeliest flesh-colour, with nothing but a draggled feather in your hair to distinguish you from your humblest tenant.'

This picture of Mr Meyrick's return from hawking in the olden time set the curate shaking with inward merriment; but the squire was by no means so well pleased, and began to mutter certain statements of what he would have done with any impertinent young jackanapes, if Providence had seen good to curse him with a son of that description. It was perhaps well for the general harmony that his own offspring at that moment, mounted upon the long-tailed *Lightfoot*, came galloping up, at sight of whom the ire of the old gentleman gave place at once to parental admiration. The lad, indeed, was good-looking enough, and rode like a centaur.

'How is't thou art so late, boy? Thou art, I doubt, but a dawdling chap,' growled Mr Meyrick, 'and wilt ever be after the fair;' by which he did not mean the fair sex, who had not yet become a pursuit with Master John, but a village festival.

It was his humour thus to chide the youth on various occasions, while in his secret heart he considered him to closely resemble the angels; and never more so than when, as now, he had his hunting leathers on, and looked—every inch of his five feet eight—a perfect sportsman.

'I stayed, father, to help Bob give *Mortimer* his oil; that dog has been out of sorts this long time.'

'Ay, ay,' returned the squire proudly, with a glance at Frederick, which seemed to say: 'And when were you ever so usefully employed, I should like to know!'

Frederick was by no means daunted by that look, although he perfectly understood it; but presently Master John remarked upon the fact of young Galton's being on foot as a circumstance caused by his own carelessness. 'I knew *Bolus* would go lame of that fore-foot, Fred, if something was not done for it. If he'd been my nag, I bet he would have been carrying me to-day, and as sound as sixpence!'

'You see,' replied Frederick tartly, who was somewhat out of breath, and perhaps out of temper, with running by the side of his mounted companions, who were by this time in full trot—'you see I have not the good-fortune to be a horse-doctor.'

'Well, you are a doctor's son, at all events,' replied Johnny coarsely; 'and there's very little difference between working up balls for horses and pills for— Oh, that's your game, is it!' and the lad was off his horse in a moment, picking up stones for reply to the missile which had whizzed within a hairbreadth of his head, before he could conclude his uncourteous parallel. Mr Morrit's face, too, was scarlet, even to the very ears that had overheard young Meyrick's remarks; and the squire perceiving this, hastened to interfere between the belligerents, whom he would else perhaps have permitted to fight it out themselves, being well convinced that in any physical argument, his sturdy son would get the better.

'Drop you that stone, John,' cried he in a tone such as he was wont to use in rating his dogs: 'I will have no brawling here: you insulted the young fellow first, and through his father too, who

is as good a man as any in the county. Drop that stone, I say.'

'Come along, Fred,' exclaimed the curate, not altogether sorry to see the boy so prompt to defend the parental scutcheon. 'Take hold of my stirrup-leather, for here is the turf at last, and we must canter on, if we would be in time. There is no boy worth a farthing who can bear malice after a run on the Downs. It seems to me that a clear wind like this clean blows all the evil out of one, and leaves us all pure within, like a newly-ventilated chamber.'

'Ay, ay,' assented the squire; 'it does give one an appetite, for certain.'

And with that the little company set off at a hand-gallop, which for nearly half a mile did not need to be moderated for the sake of the agile boy on foot. Perhaps his pluck excited the admiration of *Lightfoot's* rider, or perhaps, as the curate said, the happy motion had really an exorcising effect upon the demon of ill-will, for when they pulled up, John Meyrick jumped off, and offered his steed to Frederick.

'Jump up,' cried he, 'and let us ride and tie, as we have done scores of times before now. I am sure you must be tired.'

But the other, though appeased at once by the kindly offer, protested that he was not tired, and that nothing would induce him to ride in his walking-clothes while John in top boots went on foot—a proceeding quite inconsistent with the eternal fitness of things. Perhaps John Meyrick was not sorry for this (for he was proud of his seat on horseback, and would scarcely have liked to have met the 'field,' composed as it was sure to be of many of the gentlemen of the county, without *Lightfoot* under him), but he professed to be so; and when Fred secretly slipped the thirty shillings, lost to him on the Round that morning, into his hand, he said he was ashamed to win so large a sum from him, which he was not in the least. Upon each of these 'tarry-diddles,' or white lies, however, we will hope the recording angel dropped an accurate tear, as their sole intention, and indeed effect, was but to reconcile. And so, in the same circumstances as they started, the four, after no little travel, arrived on the brow of the hill that looked down on Chaldote Bottom. This was a broad level, plentifully sown with 'turnups' (the 'i' being changed into 'u' in that euphonious district), and at the foot of those steep green hills which skirt the Downs almost everywhere.

The meet was appointed there for the convenience of the gentlemen of the vale, but they had to ascend, of course, before the sport began, to the grass-land. The Casterton party, therefore, waited for them upon the high ground, from which the whole scene could be accurately observed, and the *dramatis personæ* recognised. Especially remarkable among them stood out two stalwart forms: one of these was Mr Tregarthen of Tregarthen, to whose efforts the resuscitation of the ancient sport was due, a magnate of the county, with a landed property of some twelve thousand a year:

- A great broad-shouldered genial Englishman;
- A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep;
- A raiser of huge melons and of pine;
- A patron of some thirty charities;
- A pamphleteer on guano and on grain;
- A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
- Fair-haired, and redder than a windy morn.

The other most remarkable figure was the curate's

far-away cousin, Mr Thomas Morrit. Although he had more than once been brought to death's door by drink, and was even now said to be on the point of paying him another visit, still he made a goodly show, like some huge tower whose walls have been sapped and undermined.

A gentleman of broken means, much given to starts and bursts of revel, but who could sing a good song yet—which was, however, in no case a hymn—in a voice not altogether spoiled by drams, and who rode a bit of blood (the last of a goodly stud) five days a week to foxhounds, harriers, hawks, or whatever else was to be ridden to. At sight of him, the curate's brow grew dark, and his lips moved, shaping, it may be, some pious wish for his relative's reformation; he forgave him, perhaps, but he was unable, despite several efforts, to forget him, and it was clear that the good man's mirth was marred for the day. Nevertheless, his antiquarian heart was stirred within him at sight of the falconer with his bird upon his wrist—the magnificent Iceland hawk, far finer than those from Wales or Scotland used in the olden time—hooded and feathered like a knight with his visor down, with his white lure (an imitation pigeon) and his string of bells. Some half-a-dozen other hawks were carried by an attendant on foot, upon a sort of hoop, so that there should be no lack of sport, if only the game were plentiful—not the stately heron, alas! in these degenerate days, but anything they can get; and on the Downs the noble creatures must needs stoop to carrion, and check at the astonished crows.

The knot of horsemen collected about these objects of interest was considerable, and the whole cavalcade began slowly to ascend the hill; as they did so, the little bells around the legs of the captive birds jangled merrily, and they moved their plumed heads excitedly from side to side, as though they knew their freedom was at hand.

'What a queer hunting-field it is!' remarked Mr John Meyrick. 'I'm hanged if they don't look like the mummings!'

'They revived old usages thoroughly worn out,

The souls of them fumed forth, the hearts of them torn out.'

murmured Frederick, quoting beneath his breath from one of his uncle's hated moderns.

'What a patrician look they have!' exclaimed Mr Morrit enthusiastically. 'It is certainly *par excellence* the sport of a gentleman. The very technical names belonging to it have an old-world and peculiar quaintness about them—mantling, and sniting, and pluming, and canceliering.'

'And what does it all mean?' inquired Mr Meyrick contemptuously. 'What do you understand by that very fine name you mentioned last, for instance, *canceliering*?'

The curate coloured, and pretended not to hear.

'Come, what is it?' persisted the merciless squire.

Fred. let go the stirrup-leather, and ran away screaming with laughter, out of reach of his uncle's riding-whip. Master John Meyrick and his father roared with merriment like bulls; it was so very seldom that the curate committed himself by talking of what he did not understand.

'The leathers by which the bells are attached to their legs are called *bevvits*,' pursued the antiquary; 'the thong by which the falconer holds the hawk is termed the *leash*.'

'I know that, parson!' ejaculated the squire, 'and so does every man who keeps a greyhound; but what is canceling?'

The curate was glad to catch sight of his friend Mr Tregarthen, as an excuse for riding away from his tormentor. Then the whole company moved slowly over the Downs with their eyes in the air, as though they were taking observations of the sun. Presently, they came upon the feeding-ground of those consequential birds the crows. Numbers of them were pacing the green-sward in the most solemn and decorous manner, and in the glossiest of black coats, as though each were awaiting the arrival of some distinguished deceased, on whom it was his duty to pronounce a funeral sermon. They pecked into the ground occasionally with their yellow beaks, but nothing seemed to come of it, and it appeared to be their especial desire afterwards to look as if they had not done it.

'It is jolly to live like a great fat crow,
For no one doth eat him wherever he go!'

exclaimed Frederick incautiously.

'That smacks of your now-a-day poetaster,' observed his uncle quietly. 'It is not good, and it is not true, as you will presently see.'

Even while he spoke, this little army of Black Brunswickers rose heavily, spread out their sable wings, and flapped slowly away, like a nightmare that is loath to leave a sleeping man. As soon as they had risen to some height, the falconer unfastened the hood of one of the splendid birds he carried, and its large eyes flashed forth like lanterns on the night. After a preliminary blink or two, it surveyed the fields of air as though it were their sole proprietor, and it was looking out for trespassers. Then, all on a sudden, its gaze lit upon the sluggish squadron—for the rook, except at chess, is a slow mover—and his jesses were at once unfastened, and the cruel creature was away. As soon as the quarry became aware of the strange and terrible tyrant that was coming up with them, they separated in all directions, and the hawk for one instant vacillated, like an alderman in an embarrassment of dishes. Immediately afterwards, he had fixed upon his particular crow to pick, and pursued him, and him alone, thenceforward, with the pertinacity of a weasel after a hare.

He seemed to make rushes at him, and to miss him, as a too eager greyhound darts at and overruns his game, and Mr Meyrick expressed his contempt for the performance by that comparison. At last, however, and as though a thunderbolt had indeed been shot from the bulging clouds, which were growing darker and darker momentarily, a black mass made up of pursuer and pursued dropped almost perpendicularly earthward; the hawk had stooped successfully. Ere it touched ground, however, was heard the falconer's shrill call, and the bird's precipitous descent was arrested upon the instant, and it came off, as if at right angles, to his master, bearing the rook in his triumphant talons. In the meantime, the more excitable of the company had been at racing-speed for several minutes, and more than one had paid the penalty of his too ambitious gaze by coming, horse and man, to Mother Earth.

The deep ruts, so deserving the attention of the flying horsemen, that intersect the Downs in all directions, had sent them headlong, and loud was

the laughter from the more prudent that greeted their fall. The curate had to thank his nephew for his own escape from a similar calamity, for his blind enthusiasm would have led him, once across a rabbit-warren, where the cob would have been certain to have put his foot into it, and, again, to charge the Ridgeway itself—at that particular spot at least five feet high—had not the voice at his stirrup-leather directed his rapt regards to earthly matters. There were several more flights after the black game, with more or less successful results. Sometimes the hawk would seize the crow from beneath, and then descend with it, which is called *trussing*, but the stooping from above was the more common practice, and, in the pursuit of the crow, destitute of danger, though in that of the heron held to be unsafe, on account of that sagacious bird presenting his bill at the most inconvenient time—like a tailor in August—and receiving the hawk upon its point, who is thereby spitted. The day was wearing into afternoon, and making a worse appearance, as regarded the weather, than ever, when a couple of hawks were flown at once, with the intent that they should work together upon a common quarry; but instead of this, they separated, one of them disappearing in the inky firmament, and the other, to the still greater distraction of the falconer, into a distant sheepfold, with the apparent determination of taking a little lamb. In the middle of this, the rain came down like a torrent. Mr Tregarthen of Tregarthen gave vent to certain quoad but very irreverend expressions, which were held to be a sort of heirloom in his ancient family.

Mr Thomas Morrit cursed himself in excellent Saxon for being such an idiot as to get himself wet through at such a sport as crow-hunting; and the curate venturing no word of condolence with the proprietor of the hawks, and not perhaps without a sly laugh in his already saturated sleeve, turned his cob's head homeward. The rest of the company setting their coat-collars up like angry cats, started off at once for what each might deem his nearest shelter.

Et Tyrii comites passim, et Trojana juvenus,
Dardaniusque nepos Veneris, diversa per agros
Tecta metu petiere.

There was, however, no *tecta* within three miles for any mounted man of them; and Frederick, for the first time, congratulated himself upon being on foot, as he crept under a well-stuffed shepherd's hurdle that happened to stand beside the Ridgeway—albeit there was but small chance of any Dido joining him there. His appearance, viewed from without, was, of course, ridiculous enough, his place of refuge being neither more nor less than the trap which boyhood sets for small birds in the winter, with only a slanting hedge-stake to prevent it falling upon its occupant, but it kept him as dry and warm as a young lad at sixteen ought ever to need to be. Fast as it poured then, however, it was nothing to what was coming, for, through the slanting lines of the herald shower, he could perceive the wall of rain advancing from the west until it darkened the air around him, and brought home to him for the first time what the parish schoolmaster had striven in vain to teach him—how the motion of a plane produces a solid. It was a grand sight, but after a little, he began to draw upon his mental resources for

means whereby to pass the time. He tried to picture to himself how the case would have stood if this had been the universal deluge, and he were the last man, and would, perhaps, have conceived something epical, but that the steadfast furious down-pour began to have its effect upon the covering of the hurdle, which distilled little rills of rain upon him—a slight inconvenience indeed, but it takes such a very little to interrupt poetical composition; then he fell back upon the intellectual stores of others, and commenced crooning to himself the songs and ballads that were dearest to him, a most excellent way of whiling away solitude, as well as improving the memory, and in every respect superior to the more popular custom of whistling the mere airs of the same—discharging the musket without the ball.

Having exhausted himself with rhymes, he tried blank verse, and declaimed to the elements in the language of King Lear, who, indeed, could scarcely have been treated by them worse than he himself was, except that he had his hurle; so that if any native had chanced to pass that desolate place in the tempest, and heard him, it would have been noted as a haunted spot for the future in the spiritual chart of the Down-country.

Scarce a thorn-tree there stands ragged and bare, and spectral with the wool it has torn from passing sheep, but a mother and her love-child at the very least have perished under it most miserably; and let the wind be soft or loud, you may always hear her dying lullaby as you pass it. Scarce a plantation lifts its trembling head, and cowers under the hillside, but Long Jack, or Wild Tom the gamekeeper, has there been found one winter's morning stiff and stark, with a jagged hole in his breast, and the black blood oozing, who never fails to make his moan o' nights to the belated traveller. But as for the fairies, who still hold their midnight dances on the Downs, as the fresh 'rings' testify, and under whose feet spring up the visible flowers, their very existence is denied, except by the merest children, and all the charming stories appertaining to them are ousted quite by these raw-head and bloody-bones legends.

Frederick had never heard a single word of the 'little folk' from Mrs Hartopp or any of his Caster-ton gossips; but the tale of the Phantom Huntsman of Chaldote Bottom he had heard, who cheered his skeleton hounds not only cup in hand, but with his head in it. Fred. was not habitually a believer in ghosts; but in that time of storm and solitude it was not without a tremor that he became for the first time conscious of other sounds about him than that made by the monotonous torrent. They seemed to shape themselves into 'Hey ho, hey ho,' like the sigh of a weary man, or like the faint 'Tally ho,' as Fred. thought, of the huntsman in question, who, it was most probable, might by this time be excessively *blasé* with his pursuit. It could scarcely, however, be the headless horseman, for how could he sigh? Was it the wind in the hurdle? No; the wind never sang a song like this:

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.

Why so?

If we enjoy it, then it flies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries:
Hey ho.

This was the song to which the 'Hey ho' belonged, and well Fred. knew both it and the singer—blithe Jacob Lunes of Caster-ton, ordinarily dealer in snuff and tobacco in that village, and carrier three times a week between it and the nearest railway station. On he came along the Ridgeway, splashing beside his large black mare, as though all over-head was blue; albeit, his smock-frock, embroidered daintily upon the breast, as though he was some peripatetic high-priest, clung to his legs, wet through, and his wide-awake hat was as a little hill with a moat around it.

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
A heaven has made it of a kind
Not well, nor full nor fasting.

Why so?

If we enjoy it, soon it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries:
Hey ho.

'Jacob!'

'Master Frederick! Why, who would have thought of seeing you here, or indeed any human creature! How you scared me with your rantin'! I was a-singing only to drown my fear of bogles. There—get up in the cart, do, and keep thyself dry. Not but that the rain will do a power of good, and is excellent for the turnups.'

It was the speciality of the cheerful carrier to see good in everything. If Leckhamsley Round, which, as everybody knows, contains little beyond bones of men some fifty generations dead, and old-world coins and spear-heads, had suddenly become an active volcano, and emitted streams of burning lava, Jacob would have expressed his opinion that it would be doubtless a good thing for the land. Fred. clambered up the front of the vehicle, and from under its hospitable canopy endeavoured to hold colloquy with its proprietor without; but the thing was impossible. He saw Jacob opening his mouth at fullest stretch, but whether to yawn or to make an observation, the violence of the storm would not permit him to know. The carrier's finger, however, pointed unmistakably to the interior of the cart, which was half-filled with monstrous packages, and lay in shadow, and presently the lad's eyes followed its direction, and fell upon the fairest sight they had ever yet beheld.

A young damsel, very simply dressed, and modest-looking, slightly blushing, and yet shyly smiling, with her long lashed eyelids drooped demurely over dimpling cheeks, was sitting close behind him, so close that his elbow almost touched her. Her attire was humble, and she sat upon one of those corded trunks (which none but females going out to service use), originally, perhaps, covered with hair, yet never seen by mortal except in a mangy and semi-bald condition, like the unhealthy hide of the tiger who is also a man-eater. And yet her face was delicate, and more than commonly soft in its expression:

A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissom as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair,
In gloss and hue, the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to shew the fruit within.

Fred. moved aside with a muttered apology for turning his back to her, and thereby placed himself within reach of the rain.

He was not wont to be indifferent to such little

inconveniences, and he had a reputation for never being at a loss for words; but now he was content to be wet, and have nothing to say for himself. If it had been light enough for her to perceive the nape of his neck, she might have easily concluded that he was blushing all over very considerably. He was too well mannered to stare, but for the life of him he could not help throwing an occasional sidelong glance upon this entrancing and unexampled vision.

One of these uncredentialed ambassadors met a similar embassy about to set furtively forth from the maiden's eyes. The mutual embarrassment then reached its climax, and it became necessary to clothe the shameful silence with a word or two. The maiden herself was the first to set about that duty, and with a modest serenity observed: 'It is very wet, sir.'

The remark was in itself judicious, as not admitting of contradiction, while it courted sympathy; but the blush and tone with which it was accompanied would have recommended a much less objectionable exclamation. Indeed, I doubt whether Master Frederick heard the mere words at all.

To him they mattered not one tittle.
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
He would have thought they murmured Little.

As soon as he knew she had spoken, the charm that had enchained his tongue was removed. He was solicitous to know at what spot the storm had overtaken the cart; and when he found that she was a stranger to the district, there was ever so much to be said upon that subject. As he spoke of the hawking, too, the girl listened with interest to his account of a sport with which it seemed she had already had through books some little acquaintance. The talk was wholly on Fred's side, but her rapt looks were worth a hundred '*Pray go ons*' and '*How delightful*.' The manifestly unequal relation of these young persons to one another was soon lost sight of in that of eloquent narrator and grateful recipient.

They were both amazed, and turned impatiently to Jacob, when the carrier put his head in at the opening of the tilt behind, and said: 'Now, here we are, almost at journey's end, Master Frederick.'

The cart, indeed, had reached the entrance of the village. The rain was over and gone, and the sun shining, although they knew nothing about it.

'I am sorry we have to part so soon,' said Frederick earnestly, imagining that this young divinity was bound for the farmhouse that stood close by.

'I am sorry, too, sir,' answered the young girl simply.

Master Frederick Galton held out his hand to say 'Good-bye.'

'Why, you needn't be shaking hands, you two,' quoth the carrier laughing, 'for you are both bound for the same house; only I thought the parson would not like it, if his nephew should be seen coming through Casterton in my cart along with the young woman. Not that there's anything wrong about it, of course; only he's so 'nation proud and particular.'

'What, in the name of common sense, do you mean, Jacob?' inquired the young man, scarlet with indignation.

'Only that this is Polly Perling, Mrs Hartopp's

niece, sir; and this is your young master, Mr Frederick Galton, Polly.'

Frederick had, up to that moment, clean forgotten that the housekeeper was expecting her niece; and if he had remembered it, would scarcely have identified her with his charming companion; and so they had both come home together, quite unknowingly, in the carrier's cart.

Speluncam Dido, dux et Trojanus eandem
Devenerant.

AN IRISH PASTORAL.

NONE can say that the modern Poet is not still identical with the Prophet at least in one respect—that of obscurity. He utters very dark sayings upon his harp indeed. We do not say that there is not as much thought in Mr Browning's verse as in Lord Byron's; there is a vast deal more: we do not even deny him as much beauty. But you cannot run and read him; and what is more, you can scarcely read him at all without a wet towel round your forehead, which is not a proper costume for the due enjoyment of poetry. In a less degree, this charge of involved and difficult writing lies against every poet of reputation of the present day—even against the Laureate himself—with the sole exception of Mr Allingham. This last-named gentleman would deserve 'honourable mention' for the unaffected lucidity of his verse, even if he did not merit the crown which is justly due to him for excellences of a higher order. His last production* may well entitle him to be called the modern Crabbe; so simple, so clear, so accurate is almost every line of description, while in addition, he possesses some epigrammatic talent which Crabbe had not. The poem in question is somewhat ambitious in its aim, being no less than an attempt to teach Irish landlords morality, and their tenants common-sense; but that the author is not altogether unfitted for the task may be gathered from the fact, that the political wisdom of his verse drew praise from Mr Gladstone himself in the House of Commons. This story in verse has scarcely any plot at all. It is a poem on everyday Irish affairs—for more than one reason, as the author himself admits, 'a ticklish literary experiment'—but quite untinged by party-colouring; and in the course of it there are many sagacious reflections, no useless regrets, and one or two well-suggested remedies. The most admirable feature of the little volume, however, is its sketches of character, which, it is not too much to say, afford us a better insight into Irish rural life, and into the causes which mar the prosperity of that unhappy country, than any prose work which we have ever met with.

Pigot, the agent,

With jovial voice and look, his hand, like Fate's,
Can freeze the dwellers upon four estates,

is the central figure of this great parochial picture;

* *Laurence Bloomfield*. By William Allingham. Macmillan.

but the nominally principal person is the landlord, Sir Ulick Harvey.

The realm of Bloomfield, late his uncle's ward,
And that which owns Sir Ulick for its lord,
Pigot now governs, agent wise and great,
Rich man himself, grand juror, magistrate.
'Twas taught as part of Bloomfield's early creed,
'Pigot—in-val-u-able man indeed !'
And though Sir Ulick loves to seem to reign,
Pigot's least whisper never falls in vain.
You find in old Sir Ulick Harvey's face,
The looks of long command, and comely race ;
No small man sees a brother in those eyes
Of calm and frosty blue, like winter skies ;
Courtous his voice, yet all the pride is there,
Pride like a halo crowns his silvery hair ;
'Tis unmixing pride that makes him frank
With humble folk, and dress beneath his rank.
Born in the purple, he could hardly know
Less of the tides of life than round him flow.
The Laws were for the Higher Classes made ;
But while the Lower gratefully obeyed,
To patronise them you had his consent,
Promote their comfort, to a safe extent,
And teach them—just enough, and not too much ;
Most careful lest with impious hand you touch
Order and grade as planned by Providence.
An apothegm, no doubt, of weighty sense ;
Had he but asked, is prejudice of mine
A perfect measure of the Will Divine ?
Or, by how much per annum is one given
A seat as privy-councillor of Heaven ?

The rest of Sir Ulick's family are sketched in lightly, but graphically, thus :

My Lady Harvey comes of Shropshire blood,
Stately, with finished manners, cold of mood ;
Her eldest son is in the Guards ; her next
At Eton ; her two daughters—I'm perplexed
To specify young ladies—they are tall,
Dark-haired, and smile in speaking, that is all.

Next, we have the curse of Ireland, the Absentee, a portrait of which there are happily not quite so many originals as there were.

Joining Sir Ulick's at the river's bend,
Lord Crashton's acres east and west extend ;
Great owner here, in England greater still.
As poor folks say : 'The world's divided ill.'
On every pleasure men can buy with gold
He surfeited ; and now, diseased and old,
He lives abroad ; a firm in Molesworth Street
Doing what their attorneyship thinks meet.
The rule of *seventy* properties have they.
Wide waves the meadow on a summer day,
Far spread the sheep across the swelling hill,
And horns and hoofs the daisied pasture fill ;
A stout and high enclosure girdles all,
Built up with stones from many a cottage-wall ;
And, thanks to Phinn and Wedgely's thrifty pains,
Not one unsightly ruin there remains.
Phinn comes half-yearly, sometimes with a friend,
Who writes to *Mail* or *Warder* to commend
These vast improvements, and bestows the term
Of 'Ireland's benefactors' on the firm,
A well-earned title, in the firm's own mind.
Twice only in the memory of mankind
Lord Crashton's proud and noble self appeared ;
Up-river, last time, in his yacht he steered,
With crew of seven, a valet, a French cook,
And one on whom askance the gentry look,
Although a pretty, well-dressed demoiselle—
Not Lady Crashton, who, as gossips tell,
Goes her own wicked way. They stopped a week ;
Then, with gay ribbons fluttering from the peak,

And snowy skirts spread wide, on either hand
The *Aphrodite* curtained to the land,
And glided off. *My Lord, with gouty legs,
Drinks Baden-Baden water, and life's dregs,
With cynic jest inlays his black despair,
And curses all things from his easy-chair.*
Yearly, the Honourable George, his son,
To Ireland brings his game-subduing gun ;
Who labours hard and hopes he shall succeed
To make the pheasant in those copses breed.

There is nothing in Crabbe superior for literal truth to the above description, while the lines in italics go deeper than Crabbe's stilus could bite. More landlords cross the stage, each a type of his class, grasping and vulgar, like Finlay—

No fool by birth, but hard, and praised for wise
The more he learned all softness to despise ;
Married a shrew for money, louts begot,
Debased his wishes to a vulgar lot,
To pence and pounds coined all his mother-wit,
And ossified his nature bit by bit—

or proud and insolvent, like Dysart, 'drawing from ancestral ground one sterling penny for each phantom pound of rent-roll ;' or Isaac Brown—

A man elect,
Wesleyan stout, our wealthiest of his sect ;
Who bought and still buys land, none quite sees
how,
Whilst all his shrewdness and success allow.

All preachers love him ; he can best afford
The unctuous converse and the unctuous board ;

For though at poor-house board was never known
A flintier guardian angel than good Brown,
As each old hag and shivering child can tell—
Go dine with Isaac, and he feeds you well.

Finally, we have the photograph of the type of a less vulgar class in the O'Hara :

O'Hara—The O'Hara, some insist—
Of princely Irish race, which sounds full well ;
But what an Irish prince was, who can tell ?
It more imports to study wisely how
They rule the world who stand for Princes now.
The present Chief, a thin-faced man of care,
Keeps here his Bailiff, but resides elsewhere ;
A widower he, some fifty-two years old,
A rigid Catholic, mild, formal, cold.
Children he had, but death removed his sons,
He locked his youthful daughters up as nuns ;
An heir for half his wealth he may select ;
His clergy use him with profound respect.
O'Hara, once ambitious, all in vain,
And indisposed for action or for gain,
Disgusted long since with a public life,
Hates England's name, but censures noisy strife ;
Is proud, dyspeptic, taciturn, and shy,
Learned in forgotten trifles, dead and dry ;
Secluded from the troublous world he lives,
And secret help to church and convent gives.
Low-let, ill-tilled, and unimproved, his lands
Are left in lazy, sneaking flatterers' hands,
Most of them of his Bailiff-steward's tribe,
Nor any who withhold that rascal's bribe.

The skill with which each of these landlords is individualised is great, and as we read each sketch, we say as of some portrait with whose original we are unacquainted : 'That must be like indeed.'

Mr Allingham does not confine himself, however, to describing the upper classes, whose features it is comparatively easy to catch. He introduces us to peasant-life, and by no means

seeks to shield the poor from blame, solely because they are poor. Still, it is evident that the chief fault in Irish misfortune lies with the rich, who delegate their duties to others, and permit, through carelessness, a state of things, the existence of which is a national disgrace. Conceive it being expedient for any class of people to conceal from their landlord's eye, or rather that of his agent, the outward evidences of that prosperity which their own frugality and diligence have acquired!

The patched, unpainted, but substantial door,
The well-filled dresser, and the level floor,
Clean chairs and stools, a gaily-quilted bed,
The weather-fast though grimy thatch o'erhead,
The fishing rods and reels above the fire,
Neal's books, and comely Bridget's neat attire,
Expressed a comfort which the rough neglect
That reigned outside forbade him to expect.
Indeed, give shrewd old cautious Jack his way,
The house within had shewn less neat array,
Who held the maxim that, in prosperous case,
'Tis wise to shew a miserable face;
A decent hat, a wife's good shawl or gown
For higher rent may mark the farmer down;
Beside your window shewn to plant a rose,
Lest it should draw the prowling bailiff's nose,
Nor deal with whitewash, lest the cottage lie
A target for the bullet of his eye;
Rude be your fence and field—if trig and trim
A cottier shews them, all the worse for him.
To scrape, beyond expenses, if he can,
A silent stealthy penny, is the plan
Of him who dares it—a suspected man!
With tedious, endless, heavy-laden toil,
Judged to have thieved a pittance from the soil.

Where no such humble well-being exists, a shorter way is taken with the tenant of whom it is expedient to get rid—he and his are evicted; and if there be sickness or old age in his cabin, of course so much the worse. Warning is given, of course; but anger, despair, and *vis inertiae* prevent the threatened ones from making any effort to mitigate their doom. The day comes round when the sheriff, accompanied by armed police, and certain men with crowbars, stand before the cottage door:

He begs for quiet—and the work's begun.
The strong stand ready; now appear the rest,
Girl, matron, grandsire, baby on the breast,
And Rosy's thin face on a pallet borne;
A motley concourse, feeble and forlorn.
One old man, tears upon his wrinkled cheek,
Stands trembling on a threshold, tries to speak,
But, in defect of any word for this,
Mutely upon the doorstep prints a kiss,
Then passes out for ever. Through the crowd
The children run bewildered, wailing loud;
Where needed most, the men combine their aid;
And, last of all, is Oona forth conveyed,
Reclined in her accustomed strawen chair,
Her aged eyelids closed, her thick white hair
Escaping from her cap; she feels the chill.
Looks round and murmurs, then again is still.
Now bring the remnants of each household fire;
On the wet ground the hissing coals expire;
And Paudeen Dhu, with meekly dismal face,
Receives the full possession of the place.
Whereon the sheriff: 'We have legal hold.
Return to shelter with the sick and old.
Time shall be given; and there are carts below
If any to the workhouse choose to go.'
A young man makes him answer, grave and clear:
'We're thankful to you; but there's no one here

Going back into them houses: do your part.
Nor we won't trouble Pigot's horse and cart.'
At which name, rushing into th' open space,
A woman flings her hood from off her face,
Falls on her knees upon the miry ground,
Lifts hands and eyes, and voice of thrilling sound:
'Vengeance of God Almighty fall on you,
James Pigot! May the poor man's curse pursue,
The widow's and the orphan's curse, I pray,
Hang heavy round you at your dying day!'

Where scenes of this sort are frequent, it is no wonder that there is no love lost between the Governed and their Rulers, and that prudence rather than good-will preserves from sedition and conspiracy even those poor who would not by nature belong to the 'dangerous classes.' Moreover, among the young and thoughtless, any enterprise against the powers that be possesses its fascination, and especially when it is secret, mysterious, and not altogether unsanctioned by the popular faith. Here is a graphic contrast between father and son:

Neal fain would join that secret brotherhood,
The rich men's terror; but his father shrewd,
Who saw the 'Ninety-eight, and blamed alike
The yeoman's pitch-cap and the rebel's pike,
Whose earliest memories were of houses burning,
Dead men from branches hung, and slowly turning,
Jack oft admonished him; and on her knees
Maureen implored her son from thoughts like these.
Yet still he hankered for the fruit forbid:
A thousand gliding scenes the curtain hid
Of plot profound, and daring enterprise;
And he himself, acknowledged brave and wise,
Head of the mystic band was seen to rise.
Great, too, this charm of mystery; to swear,
Flinging stealthy signs, enchant the common air.
When whispering school-boys to a corner creep,
Bedim their shallow plans, and call them deep,
Whilst uninitiates vainly pry and dodge,
Behold in bud the sacred cryptic lodge—
For evil or for good, a power confessed
In that old east, as in our modern west.

It must not be supposed that our author describes nothing but what is painful. Besides the carrying out of Bloomfield's excellent resolves as an Irish landlord—too lengthy a subject to be set forth here—and their great, if not complete success, there are some rents in the cloud, some bright spots amid the general indigence and discontent, portrayed with singular felicity and ease. Here is Ballytullagh in sunshine:

And yet, when crops were good, nor oatmeal high,
A famine or a fever-time gone by,
The touch of simple pleasures, even here,
In rustic sight and sound the heart could cheer.
With voice of breezes moving o'er the hills,
Wild birds and four-foot creatures, falling rills,
Mingled the hum of huswife's wheel, cock-crow,
The whetted scythe, or cattle's evening low,
Or laugh of children. Herding went the boy,
The sturdy diggers wrought with spade and loy,
The tethered she-goat browsed the rock's green ledge,
The clothes were spread to dry on sloping hedge,
The colleens did their broiery in the shade
Of leafy bush, or gown-skirt overhead,
Or washed and beetled by the shallow brook,
Or sung their ballads round the chimney-nook
To speed a winter-night, when song and jest
And dance and talk and social game are best:
For daily life's material good enough
Such trivial incidents and homely stuff.



Here also could those miracles befall
Of wedding, new-born babe, and funeral;
Here, every thought and mood and fancy rise
From common earth, and soar to mystic skies.

It would seem a pity—were it not that our pity is claimed for those he writes of—that one who had such cheerful colours at command should have chosen so sad a subject; this very choice, however, when we remember that Mr Allingham is himself an Irishman, does our author honour. He has striven hard to do his countrymen impartial justice; and we think he has succeeded. Every one interested in the welfare of Ireland and of the Irish people, might learn something worth knowing, and excellently told, from *Laurence Bloomfield*.

AN ODD SHAVER.

SOME persons have an unpleasant way of scenting slang in any expression which seems to have a vulgar savour, and it will therefore be as well to assert at once, that 'shaver' in the above title is used in its proper literal sense, and is intended to signify 'one who shaves.' It was Mr Halcyon Day who was particularly struck with the oddness of the shaver. Day was a law-student, who lived at number eleven Mountain Court, Temple. His rooms were right at the top of the staircase, as high as ever you could go without crashing through the skylight; in fact, you mounted, before you arrived at his door, exactly ninety-five steps, which, as a sardonic person once observed, the architect might just as well have made a hundred while he was about it, if it were only out of compliment to round numbers. Day's social position was peculiar. He was a law-student, as I have said, and he was a member of the Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers, and was therefore entitled to call himself a gentleman; for it is the boast of that gallant corps that they are all gentlemen, though a story is told of a certain sergeant or corporal, who, having had the honour of drilling, or helping to drill, that distinguished body of men, and having been accosted by an envious comrade in these terms: 'I say, Tom, you've got a nice corps; they're all gen'l'men in you're corps, ain't they?' is reported to have replied with the characteristic caution of a veteran: 'Well, I should say not above 'alf on 'em.' The veteran was no doubt influenced in his reply by recollections of half-crowns given or withheld, and therefore his opinion must not be considered unassailable. Even the half-crown test, however, had been enthusiastically responded to by Day; and yet Day was by no means well off; indeed, notwithstanding the assiduity with which he was supposed to be studying the law (in the dining-hall of his Inn), he was spending all his leisure hours (by which I mean the hours he had to spare from his amusements) in doing that which should procure him the wherewithal to satisfy the demands of hunger, of thirst, of the treasurer or steward of his Inn, of his laundress, of the prevailing fashion in dress, of his idle and expensive inclinations.

Now, the hours at which one is usually at leisure

from amusement are from about nine or ten o'clock A.M. to about four or five P.M. During these hours, then, Day was nearly always absent from his chambers; in fact, he was down in the city. What he did there, does not much signify, so long as it was nothing dishonest; he may have swept a crossing, he may have been an accountant, he may have been an actuary, he may have been a secretary; but whatever he was, he was away in the city every day from half-past nine A.M. until half-past four, five, or half-past five P.M.; and there was his El Dorado whence he obtained every quarter a moderate supply, not of unsightly nuggets, but of likenesses of Her Majesty. Exactly, therefore, as that Temple clock, which, so far as Day was concerned, acted just as little boys we are told should not act—for it was heard, and not seen—struck half-past nine, Day issued forth from his chambers, clean-collared, clean-booted, clean-shaven; for Day was very particular about his shaving. You see, his hair was red, or, at anyrate, reddish, and a chin upon which the beard has a tendency to be red or reddish, requires more than any other kind of chin the daily visitation of the razor. Leave that kind of chin for but one morning unscraped, and the consequences are ghastly. The particularly white skin which usually accompanies red hair, assumes a sickly appearance in connection with pale red bristles, and an idea is suggested of unwholesome and imperfectly-trimmed pork. Day was sensitively alive to this fact, and generally plied his razor every morning, spring and autumn, summer and winter, with unwearied assiduity. But he was mortal; and man, being mortal, will sit up too late overnight, will sleep too long in the morning, will neglect even the duty of shaving, and will argue himself into the desired conviction that he doesn't want it. He is especially open to this conviction in the winter, when he is short of time, sleepy of head, and cold of hand. Thus it happened that one winter's morning, Day convinced himself, without any difficulty, that he didn't want shaving that morning. The position of his windows favoured the delusion; for they were so constructed and so placed as to admit the smallest possible amount of light; a glance, therefore, into his looking-glass was sufficient to assure him, being anxious to believe it, that he didn't want shaving that morning. There was no particular difference between that morning and another, which should make shaving less necessary than at other times; but men are blinded by their own conceit. Day, then, for the first time almost since the young carrots had pushed their heads out through his skin, went out clean-collared, clean-booted, but unshaven. His step was unsteady, his mind uneasy, and his look uncollected, for his conscience smote him; he felt he had deceived himself into neglecting a duty; he was haunted by a consciousness that he looked a guy. He took one hasty glance in a sheet of plate-glass, as he turned to the right down Fleet Street, and everything was plain to him at once; the

looking-glass in his dim chambers had beguiled him; his hand had been the truer witness; his chin *was* stubbly; it *did* resemble unwholesome, improperly-trimmed pork; he *did* look a guy. Now, Day had friends of an indolent sort—men who, though always well shaven, never shaved themselves. He had heard them talk in terms of high approval of the barber they employed: he would have shaved you, they said, as the native barbers in Bengal or Bombay, or any other parts of her Majesty's Indian empire, shave you, in any attitude you pleased to assume; he would even have shaved you, as those Indian experts are said to shave one, in your sleep. He didn't wring your nose; he didn't place a great greasy palm across your mouth; he didn't push your head back, whilst he removed the hair upon your throat, till you gurgled and gasped for breath. His hand was as light as a woman's; and what is more, he never cut anybody. The only objection—if it were an objection—was, that he was very eccentric. He liked to talk, whistle, or sing over his employment; and his employers encouraged him. He used to wait upon his patrons at their own rooms; but his place of business was in Shackle Lane. The red and white ensign jutted from his door to attract public attention, and a large placard, leaning against the door-post, informed passers-by, in white letters upon a black ground, that there was such a thing to be had inside as 'clean and easy shaving for 2d.' Whether any reduction would be made to any gentleman who would be contented with 'unclean and uneasy shaving,' did not appear, nor was Day a man to bargain upon the subject, so he turned down Shackle Lane, entered Dobbs's shop, and remarked briefly: 'I want just my chin shaved, please.'

A little man, with a pasty face and two eyes like a couple of carbuncles, who was engaged in strapping razors and singing popular songs in a stentorian voice, at once turned towards him, bowed profoundly, and said: 'If you'll allow me to finish *The Captain with the Whiskers*, sir, I'll attend to you immediately: there's only one verse left.'

'Oh, certainly,' replied Day. 'I suppose you're Mr Dobbs.'

'Yes, sir, I am, sir,' rejoined the other; 'your very obedient, sir.'

Whereupon Dobbs cleared his throat, finished his song, arranged the shaving-cloth upon Day's right shoulder; and as he prepared his lather, commenced a conversation with Day after this fashion:

'Shaved fourteen gentlemen this morning a'ready, sir, and they all went out satisfied; didn't cut one on 'em—not a single scratch.'

'Mr Mason tells me,' said Day, 'you never do cut anybody.'

'What! Mr Mason of Spring Court, Temple, sir?'

'Yes, he's a friend of mine.'

'Ah, Mr Mason's a gentleman, sir, a perfect gentleman—compared to some, you know, compared to some,' he added, for fear, apparently, of committing himself too far. 'I wouldn't cut Mr Mason's throat, sir, the least bit—not for a gross o' the best razors goin'. He's been very kind to me.'

'I should hope,' said Day, who began to feel

slightly uncomfortable, 'you wouldn't cut anybody's.'

'Well, I don't know, sir,' rejoined the little barber, as he ferociously stirred up the lather to the accompaniment of a roaring sea-song; 'some throats looks very temptin'. You see, I set my razors to that edge they'd run along from ear to ear without a gentleman's knowin' I was doin' more than takin' a pimple off. Then the attitude's temptin', when a gentleman throws his head back over the top o' the chair (it ain't necessary, but some gentlemen *will* do it), and shews his Adam's apple drawn quite tight. The position is just *opposite* to that required for the guillotine (as they call it), and always makes me think o' cuttin' heads off.'

'Well, I don't do that,' said Day curtly, and in a tone which shewed he didn't like the turn of the conversation.

'No, sir,' observed the barber with a sinister look, and a curious flash of the carbuncle eyes; 'I should say you was too sensible a gentleman for that. But don't you think, sir, we barbers have great power over the gentlemen we shave? If the devil was to come over us (and the devil comes over people wonderful) only just for a second, we might cut a gentleman's head off in a moment.'

'Oh, come, that's all stuff,' said Day, feeling nervous and rather alarmed. 'Don't talk such infernal nonsense. Shave me, will you?'

'Cert'nly, sir,' remarked the little barber, and began to apply the lather in so singular a manner that Day became quite scared. He had heard of Dobbs's peculiarities, but he was not quite prepared for what he saw, heard, and felt. Dobbs plunged the shaving-brush into the lather, and then advancing to his patient with a cry of 'Rule—Bri—tannia' (Day was not aware that the barber liked to sing so uproariously during his work), 'Bri—tannia—rules—the—waves,' lathered his upper lip and the sides of his mouth. He then took another good dip of the lather, rushed at Day with the brush held out like a weapon, and with a loud shout of 'Bri—tons—never, never, never, never—shall—be—slaves!' dabbed the soap-suds over his chin and throat, rubbing the brush at the 'never, never, never, never,' round and round, and round and round, in unison with his song, and then looked about him for the razor which would best suit Day's skin. Day in the meanwhile felt very uneasy, and watched the little barber's motions with great anxiety. Dobbs, after trying half-a-dozen razors upon a hair, appeared dissatisfied with them all, and turning to Day, observed: 'You've a very peculiar skin, sir; and I don't think any of these razors will suit it. If you'll excuse me a moment, I think I've one upstairs which will exactly do your business.'

Day assented cheerfully; but whether it was the extraordinary leer with which the little barber regarded him, or whether it was the ominous expression he made use of—'do your business'—Day is not himself quite sure: he only knows that for some reason, so soon as the little barber had disappeared up the stairs, a panic seized him, a cold perspiration broke out all over him; he rose from his chair, wiped the soap-suds hurriedly from his face, struck a Vesuvian to light his cigar, bolted ignominiously into Shackle Lane, jumped into the first Hansom he could find, and drove unshaven to the city. He had a faint glimpse of the little barber peering for

a moment round the door-post of his shop with a razor of gigantic proportions in his hand, then tearing along in the direction taken by the Hansom, and evidently screaming something at the top of his voice, which Day was too far off to hear. The next morning, Day's conscience smote him; he thought he ought at least to call upon Dobbs, invent some excuse for his sudden exit, and pay the price of 'a shave.' He thought, however, he would wait until the evening, and approach the shop with caution, for somehow his heart was full of misgivings and fears of—he hardly knew what. Stealthily, therefore, he approached the barber's, and saw that, though it was quite dark, there was not a single vestige of light in the window. He drew nearer, and observed that the house was entirely closed; the shutters were up at the shop-window, the blinds were down at the other windows, and the whole appearance was that of a dwelling whence the inmates have retired to the prison, the work-house, or the grave. Wondering, he turned into the next shop, and inquired of a motherly-looking woman if she knew the reason why Mr Dobbs's was shut up. The woman, with a face upon which amusement and concern struggled for predominance, replied: 'Mr Dobbs has gone away.'

'Oh, indeed! Can you tell me where he has gone?'

'Why do you ask, sir?' said she demurely.

'Well,' replied Day, 'something so odd occurred to me yesterday at his shop, that I felt quite anxious about him. Has anything happened to him?'

'Yes, sir; the fact is, he has been very queer for a long while, and yesterday he went on so, he was obliged to be put away.'

'Put away? What do you mean?'

'Well, sir, he kep' on telling everybody that yesterday the devil came to him in the shape of a gentleman with carrot hair' (here she smiled, and glanced slyly at Day's hair and whiskers) 'a-wanting to be shaved; and he went up-stairs to get a particular razor, which had a charm about it, meaning (as he said, sir) to do for the Evil One altogether; and when he came down again, the visitor had vanished, leaving a smell of sulphur behind him. And he took on so, running after every one who had red hair with his biggest razor, that they were obliged to take him to the lunatic asylum.'

'Thank you,' said Day. 'I'm very sorry for poor Dobbs.' But he departed, muttering: 'What a narrow escape!' and his blood ran cold at the bare recollection.

THE PRIVATE BURYING-PLACE.

THE chestnut opens out its fans;
The beech unfolds its pleached leaves;
The goldfinch in the hawthorn-bush
Its nest with soft moss weaves;
Hard by, the brook (where cresses throng)
Runs, babbling merrily, along.

This is the spot I've singled out
For my long and tranquil sleep.
I'll lie with folded hands in trance,
Through which low tones will creep,
Dim memories of yesterday,
And voices sweet, but far away.

The wind is surging in the firs
(Those red-barked giants of the wood);
The rooks are wheeling round the elms,
That now the blossoms hood;
No other sound, but where the brook
Gurgles around some stony nook.

Here, when my long day's work is done,
I shall lie underneath the grass,
And still, like one in a half-trance,
Shall yet distinguish men that pass;
For sorrows, even such as mine,
Death brings a certain anodyne.

The little airy globes of down
Shall poise above me; and the bees
Drag at the purple clover flowers;
And all day long, high in the trees,
The black-bird, with his golden pipe,
Shall sing of summer ere 'tis ripe.

After a toilsome sordid life,
What majesty there is in Death!
What riches that no king can touch!
What mystery in the ceasing breath!
Sorrows that time hath brought to me,
Share not my immortality.

The trefoil shall grow thick and soft,
And daisies star my emerald pall;
And soft shall fall the summer dew,
And soft the summer showers shall fall;
The sunbeams shall point to my grave,
And the plumed grasses o'er me wave.

When I lie deep down in the hold
Of this great planet-ship of ours,
And it shall roll and circle on,
Through its predestined days and hours,
Come storm or tempest, I shall rest
Warm in my little sheltered nest.

Sprinkle upon me drifting rain,
Or swaths of cold effacing snow,
Or let the sunshine burn and parch,
I shall be still and calm below;
I shall fear neither rain nor sun,
When I and Mother-earth are one.

The generations pass away
Like the winged thistle-seed, why then
Fear Death more than the clover does?
We cannot change the doom of men.
Then welcome Death, these woes of mine,
They need thy certain anodyne.

All communications to be addressed to 'The Editors of *Chamber's Journal*, 47 Paternoster Row, London,' accompanied by postage-stamps, as the return of rejected contributions cannot otherwise be guaranteed. Communications should also, in every case, be accompanied by the writer's *Christian and surname in full*.

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